

# **The Source; a Novel Study Guide**

**The Source; a Novel by James A. Michener**

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



# Contents

<a href="#">The Source; a Novel Study Guide.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Plot Summary.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">The Tell, pp. 11-83.....</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">The Bee Eater &amp; Of Death and Life, pp. 87-171.....</a>	<a href="#">6</a>
<a href="#">An Old Man and His God, pp. 175-240.....</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Psalm of the Hoopoe Bird, pp. 243-329.....</a>	<a href="#">10</a>
<a href="#">The Voice of Gomer, pp. 333-373.....</a>	<a href="#">12</a>
<a href="#">In the Gymnasium &amp; King of the Jews, pp. 377-454.....</a>	<a href="#">14</a>
<a href="#">Yigal and His Three Generals, pp. 457-505.....</a>	<a href="#">16</a>
<a href="#">The Law, pp. 509 - 601.....</a>	<a href="#">18</a>
<a href="#">A Day in the Life of a Desert Rider &amp; Volkman, pp. 605-701.....</a>	<a href="#">20</a>
<a href="#">The Fires of Ma Coeur, pp. 705 - 760.....</a>	<a href="#">23</a>
<a href="#">The Saintly Men of Safed, pp. 763-869.....</a>	<a href="#">25</a>
<a href="#">Twilight of an Empire, pg. 873 - 927.....</a>	<a href="#">28</a>
<a href="#">Rabbi Itzik and the Sabra, pp. 931-1016.....</a>	<a href="#">30</a>
<a href="#">The Tell, pp. 1019-1088.....</a>	<a href="#">32</a>
<a href="#">Characters.....</a>	<a href="#">34</a>
<a href="#">Objects/Places.....</a>	<a href="#">41</a>
<a href="#">Themes.....</a>	<a href="#">43</a>
<a href="#">Style.....</a>	<a href="#">45</a>
<a href="#">Quotes.....</a>	<a href="#">47</a>
<a href="#">Topics for Discussion.....</a>	<a href="#">50</a>

# Plot Summary

*The Source* by James A. Michener is a voyage through history, focused on Israel and the Middle East. Some characters, places and events are historical, others are fictional.

The story begins with an archaeological dig in the 1960s that takes place at the mythical site of Makor, near Jerusalem. Many artifacts are found, including a Roman temple, basilica, synagogue, mosque and castle all on the same site. Each section of the book corresponds to a different period in the history of the site and some chapters may be several thousand years apart. The book is basically the story of the different people who lived in and around Makor from primitive times up until the 1960s. Each of the chapters in the book relates to one or more of the artifacts found at the site and tells the story of that artifact and the people that lived at the time. In each case, one of the characters in the chapter had some contact with the artifact and the chapter explains how the artifact came to be found at the site.

The book is rich in the teaching of the traditions and cultures of the various religions that existed in that area from paganism through the development of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and how they interacted. Most of the emphasis is on Makor and how the people, especially those of the Family of Ur, existed. Most of the problems in the early stages of history were based on religion and the book explains what happened in a society as different religions developed and came into existence.

Most of the tracing of the Jewish religion takes place through four characters and through these four characters, the faith and culture are explained and revealed with explanations of how the culture evolved the way it did.

The book is interesting and one of the best that Michener has written. Michener makes history come alive for the readers in the interesting journey from primitive times to the 1960s. The reader watches the Jewish faith develop and sees how Talmudic law came into being through the workings of dedicated rabbis. He also explains some of the modern rules that govern Judaism as there were problems of widowed and divorced woman trying to remarry.

*The Source* is a long but very interesting book. People interested in Judaism and historical epics will enjoy reading the book. Readers who fall into either category should not miss reading the novel. It is well worth the amount of time spent reading.



# The Tell, pp. 11-83

## The Tell, pp. 11-83 Summary

The Source by James A. Michener is a voyage through history, just as many of his other novels have been. The historically based novel focuses on Israel and the Middle East. Some characters, places and events are historical, other are fictional.

The book opens with the arrival of archaeologist Dr. John Cullinane in Akko. He is greeted by his colleagues, Jemail Tabari and Dr. Vered Bar-el and they drive to the excavation site at Makor. The dig has been funded for five years and they have high expectations of what they will find. The project is managed and administered by Ilan Eliav who works for an Israeli ministry.

The excavation site is located next to the kibbutz Makor, where they will live and eat. Cullinane must decide where to begin the dig and he gives a preparatory lecture to the staff. He explains his plans and procedures and then answers questions. They are digging in the hopes of finding a crusader castle and they talk of the possible location of the structure in the tell.

The dig begins the next day and they begin to find various artifacts, like a bullet, a coin and a menorah, none of which are from the time period of the castle. The next item they find is in the era of the Crusades and more items are found in the following days. They are sure they have found the castle in Trench B and they even made finds in Trench A. They believe the site contains the remains of a Byzantine basilica in addition to a Roman temple, synagogue and mosque.

As the dig continues, other artifacts are found. Vered is in charge of identifying the pieces. When the kibbutz workers have to leave the dig at the beginning of the harvest season, Eliav has to arrange for Moroccan workers. Most of the workers are from the family of Yusuf Ohana, whose first find is the statue of a goddess.

Zodman, the millionaire who is financing the project, sends a cable asking Cullinane to bring the menorah to Chicago. They decide to send Vered and she departs that evening.

## The Tell, pp. 11-83 Analysis

Cullinane is happy to be back in the Holy Land to conduct another archaeological dig. He is also happy to see his friends Jemail Tabari, Vered Bar-el and Ilan Eliav. He comments to himself on how well they all get along—that there is no animosity between the Arabs and the Jews.



Cullinane knows they must select the right place to begin the dig. He must produce results if he is to keep his funding. He only has funding for five years, even though the total length of the project is ten years.

As the day begins they find a menorah that is not from the era of the Crusades. A few days later there are pictures in newspapers around the world referring to the menorah as the Candlesticks of Death, based on story of a king who had his enemies killed by the time the candles burned out. This is not the kind of publicity that Cullinane wanted and they begin to have visits from the press and publicity hounds. All of this because a worker said there might be a curse associated with the menorah.

Vered rebuffs John Cullinane's romantic advance. She is engaged to Eliav and to her everything has to do with the fight for the Jewish homeland. Her husband and Eliav's wife were killed in the 1956 Sinai Campaign. John thinks her relationship with Eliav is more out of duty and she says it is because of all of the pain and suffering she has endured. He wants her to marry him but she says no.

Zodman arrives from Chicago and finds that not all Jews strictly adhere to kosher rules in Israel. This is not what he had expected and they ask him if he follows a kosher routine in his own home and he says no. They ask why he thought they would.



# The Bee Eater & Of Death and Life, pp. 87-171

## The Bee Eater & Of Death and Life, pp. 87-171 Summary

The history of Makor began with an old man, named Ur, and his family. He is chasing bees to find their honey, which he brings back to the cave to feed his family. His wife, not from the cave people, develops the practice of growing wheat and builds a house near the well, according to the customs of her people. Ur's son perfects the planting techniques, which leads to the development of a self-sufficient society. Ur's wife is the first to recognize the significance of this.

Ur feels that they should not have all of their wheat in one place. It is too easy for it to be destroyed. His son suggests they build a dike to protect the wheat fields from being flooded by the rains, which they were in the middle of a storm. Ur now spends more time tending the fields and less time hunting.

While Vered is in Chicago, Cullinane works on a progress report of the first year of the dig. He is writing of the early society of Makor, when people lived in caves. He assumes they wore clothing made of skins in 9,000 B.C.E. and estimates the amount of time it took to bring about the various philosophical, social, and technological changes.

One day a hunter from a different area kills a dog before it can attack Ur's daughter. Since he breaks the flint in his spear, he needs a new one and leads Ur and his son to a place where the stone is readily available. The hunter marries Ur's daughter and stays with them.

A nomad is looking for his missing donkey, which he rescues from the vultures. The time is 2200 B.C.E., seven thousand years after the Family of Ur first built their dwelling at Makor. There is now a town with mud brick houses. The village is walled to protect against invaders. Makor is now an agriculture center ruled by the king of Makor.

Urbaal, a descendant of Ur, is a successful farmer. He buys a statue of the goddess Astarte, as part of the society's polytheistic practices, to help his second wife Timna be more fertile. She is upset because their practice is to give their first born sons to the priests. This practice is considered to be in the best interests of the town. The town has a prosperous season and Timna becomes pregnant. She knows her husband is interested in winning a slave girl since she keeps hearing his prayers. He is chosen.

When Urbaal's four Astarte statues are stolen, he quickly replaces them. He is still longing for the slave girl and wants her for his own, despite the advice of the other men. When Amalek, whom Urbaal feels stole his statues, is chosen as the next man for the slave girl, Urbaal kills him. The priests select another man and Urbaal flees to his olive



groves, where he meets the nomad Joktan, whom he allows to stay on his land. The priests order Urbaal captured, but Joktan protects him, but he is eventually killed and Timna marries Joktan and bears a son. The first-born son is chosen for sacrifice and Timna watches as Joktan yearns for the slave girl.

## **The Bee Eater & Of Death and Life, pp. 87-171 Analysis**

The history of Makor is traced back to primitive times when people live in groups and recognize marriage. The men do the hunting and the women work in the fields and do domestic chores. They all live in caves and spoken language is developing. The people make new words when they need them as the result of some new experience.

Ur's wife is not from the cave people and she learns how to grow wheat and her son perfects the planting technique. She builds a house near the well, as is the custom of her own people. Their group of people take the first steps toward self-sufficiency as a result of this.

Ur has mixed feelings about the changes in his life. He is now living in a house instead of a cave. Instead of spending his time hunting, he is now tending fields. His son-in-law, a hunter from another area, shows Ur and his son a place where there is an abundance of flint stone. His son is eventually killed by a wild boar.

Seven thousand years later, the town of Makor is an agricultural center, which trades its surplus agricultural products for the manufactured goods of other places. The town has one hundred mud-brick houses with a population of seven hundred and is ruled by the king of Makor. The religion is polytheistic. The town has been destroyed several times by invading armies but is always rebuilt.

Urbaal's second wife Timna, is upset at the custom of surrendering the first born son to the priests for sacrifice. The mothers are expected to watch their sons thrown into the fire in silence. These rites are forced on the people by the priests which is why many of the people are not happy with their gods.

Urbaal is killed for killing the man who the priests selected for the slave girl. Timna marries Joktan and watches the whole process repeat itself. Their first-born son is selected for sacrifice by the priests and Joktan prays to be selected as the man who spends time with the slave girl.



# An Old Man and His God, pp. 175-240

## An Old Man and His God, pp. 175-240 Summary

An old man called Zadok is told by a loud voice that he must leave the desert. The voice is that of the god, El-Shaddai, who tells him not to worship other gods. Zadok still uses flints as he clings to the old ways. There are seven hundred people in Zadok's tribe that have been chosen by El-Shaddai to move west.

As leader, Zadok will not permit one of his Hebrew women to marry a Canaanite unless he forswears allegiance to the god Baal and is circumcised and converted to El-Shaddai. In this way, Zadok keeps his tribe homogenous. Captured slave women also have to adopt El-Shaddai. His son Ephraim helps manage the tribe on the journey west. They cross the Jordan and continue past Hazor and approach Makor, where they know a battle will take place.

Cullinane is still plagued by people wanting to see the Candlesticks of Death. He digs by days and spends his evenings learning about the Hebrew customs that the Makor civilizations were built upon.

Many of the gods of the Canaanites evolved from humans and the legends surrounding them. Baal evolved from Urbaal as his story became immortalized over the generations. The town of Makor also grew during this time and was fifteen feet higher with a population of fifteen hundred people. Its temple is now dedicated to Baal. Uriel, a descendant of the Family of Ur, is now a leader of Makor.

Zadok's tribe is at Makor and Zadok is allowed to enter the walled city. The Hebrews are allowed to settle in unused pastures and they work out the rules for their arrangements. Both Uriel and Zadok are happy with the arrangements they work out but Rahab, the wife of Uriel, predicts that there will be trouble. The trouble comes over religion when some of the Hebrews go to the place of Baal and observe some of the activities related to Astarte.

Zadok is outraged by these activities and goes to see Uriel, who is interested in assimilating the Hebrews into their Canaanite culture. Both men learn of the sacrileges of the people. The two men try to resolve their problems as pressures mount from the two populations. Rahab again warns Uriel and advises him to attack and destroy the Hebrews. They send a signal to the Hebrews by demonstrating a show of force by parading their military and horses.

Zadok's daughter Leah and Uriel's son Zebion want to marry. Leah is pregnant. The details are worked out and the marriage is arranged. El-Shaddai tells Zadok that the abominations taking place must end and Zadok tells Uriel that his Canaanites must accept El-Shaddai. Both sides make plans for war.





Many Hebrews are slaughtered in the attack from the Canaanites and El-Shaddai orders the Canaanites be killed. The Hebrews attack and burn Makor, killing more than eight hundred Canaanites. The survivors agree to accept El-Shaddai. Zadok dies that night.

## **An Old Man and His God, pp. 175-240 Analysis**

The one Hebrew god is called El-Shaddai and the people are free to obey or disobey. By this time copper tools have been in use for three thousand years and bronze tools for two thousand years. El-Shaddai has ordered Zadok and his tribe to move to the west. They follow his orders and cross the Jordan into the land of the Canaanites. They approach the walled village of Makor and they know there will be a battle. Zadok consults El-Shaddai who tells him there will be no battle.

Eliav advises Cullinane on what parts of which different Bibles and other books Cullinane should read. Cullinane needs to learn the Hebrew culture that was the basis for the development of Makor.

The story of Urbaal becomes a legend over the seven hundred years following his death and he evolves in Baal, one of the chief gods of the Canaanites. All of the characters involved in the incident surrounding the murder of Amalek are worked into the religious schema.

Makor is prosperous under Uriel. They have a developing economy with a developing monetary system based on gold and silver and a secure form of government. They have three languages and are developing the forerunner of the alphabet.

Problems eventually arise over religion as the relative weights of the gods change in the two cultures. Gods become less important to the Canaanites and El-Shaddai becomes more important to the Hebrews.

The situation eventually worsens when Zadok's daughter, Leah, marries Zebion, son of Uriel. She adopts many of the Canaanite customs and practices. Zadok consults El-Shaddai who tells him the abominations must end and Zadok tells Uriel that the Canaanites must accept El-Shaddai as their own god.

As Rahab predicted, the situation continues to deteriorate and both sides prepare for war. The Canaanites attack and slaughter many of the Hebrews. The Hebrews eventually attack and burn Makor. The few survivors agree to accept El-Shaddai. Zadok dies that night and Epher becomes the new leader. Years later, Epher finds that the people have again erected a monument to Baal.



# Psalm of the Hoopoe Bird, pp. 243-329

## Psalm of the Hoopoe Bird, pp. 243-329 Summary

It is now 996 B.C.E., four hundred eighty years after the time of Uriel and a new defense wall is built around Makor by an engineer named Hoopoe, who is named after an Israeli bird. Hoopoe and others are nominal Hebrews who still worship Baal. Makor is now important to King David and the defense of Jerusalem. Even though King David promotes international religion, it is not the practice in Makor.

Hoopoe wants to build a new water system but the governor of Makor is opposed to the idea. He discusses his plan with Meshab the Moabite and they go to study the waterfall and they plan the design of the water system. Their discussion turns to religion and the new god Yahweh. He explains how Kerith wants to return to Jerusalem and her own god, Yahweh. She keeps questioning him about their plans.

General Amram and other officials arrive from Jerusalem to inspect the fortifications. Hoopoe explains the weakness of the waterfall and his plan for a new water system and why this is vital to the defense of the town. The General approves the plan. While Hoopoe is in the hills planting flags as markers for the tunnel, Kerith tells the General that she wants to return to Jerusalem. She is not happy in Makor. Amram keeps Hoopoe occupied in the next few days and spends time with Kerith who will not allow herself to be seduced. He finally tells her to stay with her husband.

Hoopoe works on the water system with the help of Meshab for the next three years. As they near the end of the tunnel digging, they need new iron tools and must travel to Phoenicia for them. Hoopoe makes the trip. He spends a week in Accho and in his absence, Meshab takes his evening meal with Kerith, as requested by Hoopoe. He parties the whole week. When Hoopoe returns, they use the tools to finish digging the tunnel.

In Chicago, Vered gives lectures on the Candlesticks of Death. It is the time of the fifty days at Makor, so not much work is taking place. Cullinane spends his time missing Vered and writing reports, which Eliav criticizes as being too academic.

Meshab is given his freedom when the tunnels meet but he stays to help Hoopoe finish the project. At this time, the governor is giving sanctuary to a murderer, Gershom, who has frequent visits from Kerith and Hoopoe is told of it. He sees the solution in moving to Jerusalem.

In the fourth year, King David comes to inspect the water system. Kerith leaves for Jerusalem with Gershom and David orders Meshab killed. Hoopoe is left to raise two children and lives out his days in Makor.



## Psalm of the Hoopoe Bird, pp. 243-329 Analysis

Religion is changing in the area. Baal is still worshiped as a god, but now there is also Yahweh, who develops from El-Shaddai. He is the god of Moses and considered to be all powerful. Many people pray to Baal for their daily needs and problems and to Yahweh as a higher force who controls the heavens.

Makor now has a population of eight hundred with nine hundred farmers living outside its walls and the area is well governed. The town is active in trades and many goods from other areas are available for the population. The houses are now made of stone, wood and plaster.

Hoopoe wants to build a new water system at Makor and obtains permission from General Amram. The project is to take three years. Kirith is not happy because she wants to return to Jerusalem but has to stay because of the tunnel project. The slave Meshab is Hoopoe's assistant on the project and is a big help to him. When Hoopoe goes to Accho for tools, he asks Meshab to have his evening meal with Kirith.

Just as the tunnel is being completed, a murderer is given sanctuary by the governor. His name is Gershom and he eventually falls in love with Kerith and they run off to Jerusalem together. She tells Hoopoe when King David is there to inspect the water system.

Meshab, who becomes a free man when the tunnel digging was completed, is killed on King David's orders. Hoopoe lives out his days in Makor raising his two children who will carry on the Family of Ur.



# The Voice of Gomer, pp. 333-373

## The Voice of Gomer, pp. 333-373 Summary

Over the centuries, the Hebrews face reprisals from Yahweh for their behavior. The year is now 606 B.C.E. and Makor has changed. Hoopoe's wall is all but crumbled. The descendent of the Family of Ur is now Jeremoth, who is a Canaanite. A woman named Gomer lives at the other end of town.

One day, while fetching water, a voice tells Gomer to take her son, Rimmon, to Jerusalem. Gomer talks to her son about the idea. The voice of Yahweh tells her again the next day that Rimmon must go to Jerusalem. She promises Yahweh that she will do so after finishing sewing a white dress for Jeremoth's daughter. She feels that her son has been chosen for some task but she does not know what.

Rimmon finds out from Jeremoth about the trip to Jerusalem the next day. Rimmon and Gomer spent eight days traveling to reach Jerusalem. They walk around the city talking about the history and then go outside the walls and built a temporary shelter in an olive grove. They remain for the eighth day of the festival. They see Mikal, the daughter of Jeremoth dancing on the grapes in the wine press. She spots Rimmon. Rimmon and Mikal eventually marry and Gomer comes to like Mikal.

The Egyptians appear and select the men of Makor to serve in the Pharaoh's army against Babylonia. It does not matter what the men want; they have no choice. Rimmon is one of the men taken.

Cullinare continues his study of the Hebrew culture. He and Eliav discuss the role of women in the ancient Hebrew culture. Vered says that Jewish women are happy and that they are pleased with Jewish men.

Mikal stays with Gomer while Rimmon is gone and has a son named Ishbaal. A man arrives and tells them that all the men of Makor have been killed. One day, thirty to forty men return to Makor. Rimmon is among them. They say Egypt was defeated.

Gomer continues to function as a mouthpiece for Yahweh and eventually is jailed for her actions and views. The Babylonians take Makor with Yahweh's assistance. Gomer is killed by the Babylonians.

## The Voice of Gomer, pp. 333-373 Analysis

Yahweh tells the widow Gomer to take her son Rimmon to Jerusalem. Rimmon is not interested, but after several more appearances by Yahweh, Gomer insists. They make the difficult ninety mile journey and are there for eight days of the fest. On the way home, Rimmon tells his mother that he wants to marry Mikal, the daughter of Jeremoth.



Gomer is not in favor of the marriage since she and Rimmon are Hebrews and Jeremoth's family is basically Canaanite. She also feels that Yahweh has chosen Rimmon for some purpose. Rimmon marries Mikal and is taken into the army of the Egyptian Pharaoh. News comes that all of the men of Makor have been killed and Gomer vows revenge on the Babylonians.

Yahweh speaks through Gomer. Even Rimmon begins to realize this in Jerusalem. Yahweh plans to save Israel by speaking through Gomer. He does not want the walls of Makor to be rebuilt. He says Israel has too many gods and must be defeated for the good of the people. In response, Gomer orders Mikal and her child out of her house. She is eventually imprisoned for her actions and views. Both Jeremoth and Rimmon think she is insane.

When the Babylonians enter Makor, Yahweh announces that he has been speaking through Gomer. He tells the Hebrews to accept their punishment and their future will be better.



# In the Gymnasium & King of the Jews, pp. 377-454

## In the Gymnasium & King of the Jews, pp. 377-454 Summary

Slowly, over the years, the Hellenist gods are forced on the Jews of Makor, who refuse to accept the edicts of the emperor. One old man refuses to accept the heathen ways and is slowly killed. The spectacle is watched by Governor Tarphon and Jehubabel, the leader of the Jewish community. Tarphon writes a report advising the government to withdraw the edicts before there is a rebellion.

Jehubabel tells Tarphon that there could be trouble if the government does not retreat. Jehubabel agrees to stall on circumcisions, and Tarphon tears up part of the report thinking that trouble will be averted. Jehubabel continues to perform circumcisions for his people.

Tarphon returns to Makor with news of inspections of Jewish boys, saying the parents will be flogged to death if the boys are circumcised. Jehubabel is relieved when the soldiers report that none are found.

Menalaus wants to take part in the games at Antioch but Tarphon says he cannot because he is circumcised. They discuss having the procedure reversed. When they are away at the games, a circumcised baby is found. All are executed.

In Antioch, Menalaus has the surgery to reverse the circumcision. It is the way to citizenship and the Olympics. He remains in Antioch while the others return to Makor. When he does return, it coincides with the Jews fleeing the town.

Makor is now under Roman rule with Roman temples and Romans gods worshiped. The architect of all of the buildings is imprisoned in the temple of Venus. His wife, Shelomith, is a Jew while he, Timon, is a Roman. Timon wonders if he will die that day, figuring that Herod must be already dead. Timon and Shelomith reminisce about the past and why Herod fell. He had usurped the power of King David. They talk about Cleopatra and the battle between Antony and Octavian. They had warned Herod about his brutality but he was basically a madman.

Timon asks the soldiers why they would obey the orders to kill them since Herod is dead and they say that if Herod is dead, then they obey the new king.

Four soldiers come for them. They decide that it is the end and that they are soon to be killed. Shelomith begins to pray. The governor arrives and tells them that Herod is dead and they are free.



## In the Gymnasium & King of the Jews, pp. 377-454 Analysis

The Hebrews of Makor are held by the Babylonians for fifty years and then encouraged to return to Makor. After the collapse of the Hellenist empire, Makor comes to be ruled by Seleucus. Under Seleucid rule, the Jews are free to worship their own god, as long as they do not offend Zeus. Then they are told they have to accept Zeus but can still worship in their synagogues. The rules keep coming. Eventually, they cause problems with the Jews of Makor who have violated the ban against circumcisions, among other things.

Jehubabel accepted the edicts because Tarphon convinced him that it would save lives. Tarphon writes a report advising the Selcuids to withdraw the edicts before the Jews rebel. Jehubabel continues to perform circumcisions.

Jehubabel has a son named Benjamin and known as Menalaus. He is an athlete who divides his time between the palace and the gymnasium. When Jehubabel finds his son might be involved with Melissa, he orders him to return home. Menalaus says he and the others talk with Melissa only at the request of Tarphon. However, Menalous is lost to his family and religion. He has his circumcision reversed so he can become a citizen and take part in the Olympics.

As the situation with the search or circumcised babies continues, the Jews meet and decide to flee Makor. They hide in the hills and swamps and survive in anyway they can.

Makor is now under Roman rule. Timon is an engineer and builder. He has built many of the Roman buildings at Makor, Jericho, Antioch and other places in the empire. He is an associate of King Herod who is responsible for the brutal slaughter of thousands of Jews. Most of this chapter consists of Timon and his wife thinking and talking about the events that have taken place.

Apparently, Herod orders the execution of Timon and Shelomith. Timon tries to reason with the guards. Herod must be dead by this time, so why would they follow the orders of a dead king and execute them? They say that if Herod is dead, then there is another king that has taken his place and they will obey his orders.

Four soldiers arrive and Timon thinks it is the end, but the governor walks in and tell them that Herod is dead and they are free.



# Yigal and His Three Generals, pp. 457-505

## Yigal and His Three Generals, pp. 457-505 Summary

In 37 C.E., Caligula becomes emperor. The tyrant is not accepted by the people of Judea and he threatens them with armies and slavery. At this time, Yigal lives in Makor and sees what will happen if the Romans invade. Yigal is a common laborer, not an official of any kind. Yigal feels that the Jews should resist the Romans and their edicts in trying to force their brand of paganism on the Jews. He talks to the other Jews and says they should tell the Romans they would rather die than accept the emperor's images in their synagogues. Simeon, one of the Jewish leaders disagrees and says the only way for the Jews to survive is to submit to the Romans. The Jews of Makor are almost evenly divided between the two views.

Yigal's group marches to Ptolemais where they all sit on the ground. Yigal and Naaman are taken inside the city walls where they present their demands to Petronius. Petronius announces that the statues of Caligula will be delivered in Judea as planned. As they begin marching, the Jews of Makor lie on the ground in front of them. Yigal says they are prepared to die.

The troops cordon off the area so the Jews from Makor cannot leave or obtain food. A child dies on the fourth day and Petronius tells Yigal to take his people home. After several days, Petronius holds a meeting with Jewish leaders in Galilee. The Jews refuse to accept the statues saying that they too are prepared to die. Petronius begs them and tells them he will kill them if he has to.

Finally, Petronius tells the Jews to go home and plant their crops. He will not deliver the statues, as he has been ordered to do by Rome. Incensed by the fact that he is being defeated by a mere olive worker, he orders an attack on Makor and then cancels it. The emperor is killed and Makor is saved, but there are a series of tyrannical emperors. Nero sends General Vespasian and sixty thousand men to crush the Jews.

Eliav and Vered explain the difference between the Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews to Cullinane. Eliav and Vered are both Ashkenazi. Cullinane continues his research at a library and has conversations with Tabari on the subject. Tabari takes him around the area so he can see the differences.

Yigal is fifty-three when Vespasian arrives in the year 67. Naaman is the leader of the Makor Jews. Yigal again says the Jews must stand up against Rome. Naaman thinks they should submit. The town discusses the implications of their people being driven from Makor and what it will mean for them and coming generations. In the middle of this Josephus arrives in Makor and announces they will fight the Romans.





When Vespasian arrives Yigal is told to tell him that Makor will not surrender. The battle begins and the Jews fight bravely, repelling the Romans. Josephus continually revises his strategies to meet the Romans' tactics. Vespasian realizes that it is Josephus and not Yigal that is commanding the Jews and Vespasian vows to bring him to Rome and Kill him.

After three weeks, Josephus and Naaman sneak out of Makor and hide, leaving Yigal to defend Makor. The town is taken by the Romans and Yigal and his wife are crucified and forced to watch the slaughter of the Jews as they die. The town is then burned.

## **Yigal and His Three Generals, pp. 457-505 Analysis**

Judea, under Roman rule, is being forced to accept statues of Caligula. The Jews of Makor refuse to allow the statues in their synagogue. The young Yigal devises a plan to oppose the Romans. The Jews will lie in the path of the Romans, prepared to die, if necessary, to prevent them from delivering the statues. Half of the Jews of Makor agree with Yigal; the other half agree with Simeon that submission to the Romans is the only way to survive.

Yigal leads the group to Ptolemais where they make it clear that they are prepared to die rather than allow delivery of the statues. The Romans starve the Jews that are blocking their path but they refuse to give in.

Petronius, despite his gruff manner, is averse to killing the Jews. He is in a position where he could be killed for not following orders. He meets with the Jews several times and explains the situation and finally allows them to return to their fields saying he would not deliver the statues. The only thing that saves his life is the murder of the emperor.

Years later Pontius Pilate and Nero sent the general Vespasian to crush the Jews. Vespasian, who wants to be made emperor, arrives in Ptolemais with an army of sixty thousand men. Yigal is fifty three years of age at this time.

The Jews of Israel consist of Ashkanazi and Sephardi. The Ashkenazi are basically Germanic and are the farmers during the early days. The Sephardi are the scholars from Spain, Morocco and that area. The differences between the two groups are disappearing until World War II. The Sephardi become more important when Israel is formed. Israel has a problem with the two groups which they consider to be an internal problem. The problems arose in the days of Vespasian, when the Jews were forced from their homeland.

Yigal favors resisting Vespasian and the Romans. Josephus arrives in Makor to help them fight. He brilliantly commands the Jews, but after, three weeks does not want to die and leaves the town. The Romans overtake the town, crucify Yigal and his wife and slaughter most of the people. The survivors are taken into slavery.



# The Law, pp. 509 - 601

## The Law, pp. 509 - 601 Summary

Makor does not hear of Jesus Christ or his crucifixion until 59 C.E. Messengers are spreading the word of Christianity through the region. In 313, Christianity is declared the religion of the empire and Rome plans to build a basilica in Makor. Rabbi Asher is the unpaid rabbi of Makor and has the stonecutter Yohanon finishing the interior of the temple.

The rabbis know the Law, both written and oral. God delivered the directives and the rabbis interpret them. The men spend a lot of time discussing the meaning of the Law and how it applies to different situations. When he returns to Makor, he teaches the people what he has learned. He returns to Tverya to work on the dietary laws. By following these laws, the Jews will always be bound together, even though they do not have their own nation. The rabbis analyze and interpret the Torah to develop the Talmud over the centuries.

The stonecutter's son, Menahem, was born out of wedlock and the boy is being raised by Yohanon. He wants the boy to be a Jew but the rabbi says he never will be. The boy is already treated as an outcast by other children. His father keeps him busy by taking him on trips to the mountains to find different kinds of rocks. At twelve, the boy begins to work in the goats mill.

The rabbis of Tverya say there is only one way Menahem can be Jewish. He must steal something and then be sold into slavery with a Hebrew family and married to a Hebrew slave. When they are freed in five years, he would be accepted into a congregation. Even though he will never be considered Jewish, his children would be Jews. Menahem continues to work with his father in the next few years. He and Asher's daughter, Jael, want to marry and Asher quickly arranges her marriage to another man.

Father Eusebius arrives to build the basilica in Makor and is impressed with the synagogue. They plan to tear down thirty buildings owned by Jews for the basilica and the situation is discussed by the rabbis at Tverya. After the discussions, Asher leaves Tverya for the last time. The Jews of Makor are upset with the plans for the basilica—thirty of their buildings will be destroyed and taxes are increased. A man burns the tax collector's warehouse and is killed. There is talk of the Roman Army marching on Makor.

Menahem talks to the priest about building the basilica. They talk about Christianity. Menahem wants to be accepted by a religion and he is told he will be accepted by the Christians, no matter what his background is. Both he and Yohanen convert. Menahem becomes known as Mark and Yohanen takes the name John.

There are clashes in the different towns and the Roman Army marches into the area. In Makor, they destroy the homes of the Jews. John rescues Asher and tells him to go



back to Tverya. The Army wrecks the synagogue that it took John and Mark so many years to build. The basilica is to be built on the grounds where the synagogue once stood. Most of the Jews leave Makor. Of the ones who remain, some convert to Christianity.

## **The Law, pp. 509 - 601 Analysis**

In the 300s C.E., Makor is part of the Byzantine Empire and under Christian rule. There is talk of building a basilica in Makor and Rabbi Asher is sure they will build one. Asher travels to Tverya to work on the laws. God delivers his directives and the rabbis interpret them. He meets with a group of rabbis to work on the meaning and interpretation, which they then teach their people. These laws bind the Jews together wherever they are, even though they do not have a nation.

This process of interpretation of the Torah and the development of the Talmud takes centuries. The rabbis of Tverya sometimes spend a year discussing one small point.

The decision to build the basilica in Makor causes problems with the people whose homes and businesses will be taken. Menahem talks to the priest about helping to build the basilica. He is told he could be accepted into the Church and could freely marry, no matter what his background. He and his father both convert and adopt the Christian names of Mark and John.

The troubles continue in Makor as the Jews protest the seizing of their homes and the higher taxation. There are acts of rebellion as they burn the warehouse and home of the tax collector. Eventually the Roman troops arrive and destroy all of the Jewish buildings in Makor. Many of the Jews leave Makor.



# A Day in the Life of a Desert Rider & Volkman, pp. 605-701

## A Day in the Life of a Desert Rider & Volkman, pp. 605-701 Summary

Islam becomes a factor in Makor in 635 as Arab squadrons of raiders capture Byzantine cities to spread Islam. Abd Umar fights on the side of the Prophet Muhammad and learns many of his military strategies from him. Abd Umar does not hate the Christians or Jews. He passes on the orders of no killings to his men.

In Makor, the Christians wait. They know the approach of the Arabs will hinder their trade in Christian relics. The town is the site of the three century old Basilica of St. Mary Magdalene which is famous in Europe. There are also two other Christian churches in Makor. One holds to the views of Rome and the other to the views of the Nestorians, so there is quite a bit of bickering among the Christians of Makor.

On the ride to Makor, Abd Umar sees Safat burning. He knows it is the work of Abu Zeid and that it will not be allowed in the future. He himself does not favor violence and unnecessary killing.

The Jews run the dye industry in Makor. There are two brothers, Aaron and Judah. Business is bad because of the fall of Damascus to the Arabs. When Judah is away on business, Aaron rapes Judah's wife Shimrith. After the second time, she goes to the rabbi for help and he accuses her of seducing Aaron. Judah is murdered when he returns to Makor and Shimrith suspects Aaron. Under Jewish laws, she must marry Aaron. She refuses and the Jewish community is split on the matter.

The pagans are terrorized by the approach of Islam since pagans are treated differently than Christians and Jews. They are usually killed. Makor is at its weakest as Abd Umar and his army approach. There is no resistance by Makor and only two pagans are killed for refusing to accept Allah. Even the pagans from the Family of Ur convert.

In Germany, in 1096, Volkmar, the Count of Gretz, opens his gates to thousands of hungry people whom he offers to feed. He then finds out that they are loyal to the false Pope and refuses to ride with them. Some of the town people join the ride to Jerusalem. This is the time of the Crusades.

Volkmar's brother-in-law Gunter and six other knights come to tell him that they have raised an army to conquer the kingdoms in the Holy Land and they are not interested in the Popes and their problems or religion. They are interested in money. Volkmar finally decides to join them. The group they raise begin to kill the Jews in Gretz. Volkmar is enraged but cannot do anything. The slaughter of Jews continues until they reach Austria. They face resistance in Hungary and Bulgaria and Volkman is captured and



imprisoned in Sofia and his army slaughter in Bulgaria and Constantinople. Volkman, when released, finds the cities more fortified than he thought and finds their groups being slaughtered by the Turks. When reinforcements arrive, they crossed into Asia.

When they confront the army of the Turk, Babek, Gunter and his men flee and the women and others are taken captive by the Turks. He prevents his army from being cut in half and they defeat Babek. They again defeat Babek near Antioch in the fourth year. They move toward Jerusalem.

In Makor, Shaliq ibn Tewkik, head of the Family of Ur, and others watch the progress of the Crusades. He tells his people that they need to survive for the first three days of the Makor invasion. After that, things will settle down and they should be safe. He and his family do this when the Crusaders approach and they survive their arrival. Volkmar becomes governor of Makor where he stays since he is injured and his life saved by Shaliq who takes the Christian name of Luke.

Gunter returns to Makor, after his successful conquests, and builds a castle with a well and fortifies the city. Gunter returns and they feud over who owns and rules the area. Gunter tells Volkmar that they will be attacked by Damascus someday.

## **A Day in the Life of a Desert Rider & Volkman, pp. 605-701 Analysis**

In 635, Arab squadrons march to conquer Byzantine cities. Captain Abu Zeid leads one group to Safat. The other group, led by Abd Umar, is assigned to Capture Makor in as peaceful a way as possible. The purpose is to spread Islam. The teachings of Islam are clear and simple to Abd Umar. There is one God who was discovered by the Jews. That God sent Jesus Christ as a prophet to make his views known and then sent Mohammad as a prophet. In this sense, Islam is a continuation of the religions the Jews and Christians started. The Christians and Jews are misguided in not accepting Muhammad and Abd Umar does not hate them. He believes the three religions can co-exist until the Christians and the Jews see the wisdom of Islam.

The Christians of Makor are not in agreement in their views regarding the nature of Jesus Christ. There are the Egyptian and Byzantine views, the Roman view and the Nestorian view. As a result, there is a lot of bickering among the Christians.

One third of the population of Makor is Jewish. They are not a strong group. The rabbi only functions to see that they adhere to the Talmud and the civil laws. They are also awaiting the arrival of Islam, having heard of the massacres in other places. The Jews in the community are divided over whether or not the widow Shimnith should be forced to marry her brother-in-law Aaron who murdered her husband.

There is also a pagan population at Makor and they also wonder how Islam will affect them. There is a hidden altar to Baal under the Basilica so the pagans attend the



Christian services and worshiped their own god. Since Islam views the pagans differently than the Christians and Jews, they wait in terror of the arrival of Islam.

When the Arabs arrive, there is no fighting or resistance. Only two pagans are killed for refusing to accept Islam.

There are two Popes in Europe at the beginning of the Crusades. There is a French Pope and a Roman Pope. At this time the Christians are the riders and the Jews are the financiers. Volkmar, the Count of Gretz in Germany, finds his brother-in-law and six other knights have formed an army to go crusading in the Holy Land to conquer kingdoms. They do not care about the Popes or religion. Their goal is money.

As the Crusades move across Europe and into Asia, the town of Makor waits. The current head of the Family of Ur is Shaliq ibn Tewkik. He and his family hide in a cave when Volkmar's army arrives. Shaliq says he is a doctor, saves Volkmar's life by amputating his leg, converts to Christianity and takes the name Luke.

Gunter builds the castle at Makor, the object of Cullinane's excavation years later.



# The Fires of Ma Coeur, pp. 705 - 760

## The Fires of Ma Coeur, pp. 705 - 760 Summary

The Crusades end in 1289 and the eighth Count of Gretz inhabits the castle of Ma Coeur. He is a descendant of the original count. When the Mamelukes take over the Muslim empire from Damascus, trade opens up. The trader Muzaffar brings word to Court Volkmar and his wife that the Mamelukes have given permission for their pilgrimage. Muzaffar says he will ride with Volkmar and his son. He feels the Mamelukes will invade and that Volkmar should send his son to Germany.

They set out on their trip in April. As they ride, Volkmar points out the sights to his son. He explains their history as they make their pilgrimage. They head to Nazareth. Volkmar spends a lot of time thinking about the Crusades, and what went right and what went wrong. He realizes that the Crusades made a mistake in not eliminating the Turks, which is also Tabari's point of view, many centuries later.

As they visit each site, Volkmar explains the history that corresponds to it. He also discusses the strategic implications of the actions the people took. They meet the Mameluke guards on the way to Tabarie and visit with them. His son sees the first Jew he has ever seen. They ride on to Saphet where they are to meet Muzaffar.

At Saphet, the young boy is given a gift of a Turkish horse. A Mameluke captain tells Volkmar that there is talk of a new Crusade. They hope that the current truce will last the ten years it was negotiated for. Muzaffar arrives the next day. He too has heard about the possibility of a new Crusade. None of them see any reason for it. Muzaffar thinks the Mongols will join the Christians against them. He again urges Volkmar to send his son to Germany.

By summer, it looks like the new Crusade will be avoided and Volkmar changes his plans of sending his son to Germany. He travels to Acre to discuss the situation and finds Muzaffar there. One day there he meets a group of newly arrived Jews and stops to talk to them. Even though they are from Europe, they tell him that Jerusalem is their homeland. They talk of the differences in their religions and help Volkmar to understand their religion and position.

Volkmar talks to Muzaffar of his conversation with the Jews. He returns to talk to the Jews and talks to a Rabbi. While they are talking, a ship full of returning Crusaders arrives. One of the soldiers accuses Muzaffar of being an infidel and slashes his shoulder. Volkmar saves Muzaffar from being killed by the crowd. This starts a riot that ends in a massacre. The killings end any discussion of a continuation of the truce as far as the Mamelukes are concerned.

Volkmar returns to Ma Coeur and makes plans to defend the area. He prepares the area for a siege, feeling if the farmers move inside the walls, they will have enough food





and water to last two years. The Mamelukes' attack comes in February, with approximately one hundred thousand men and their weapons.

Volkmar meets with the Mameluk leaders. Volkmar cannot accept their terms because it will mean slavery for his people. The villagers who chose to leave will be sent into slavery.

When the siege begins, it is brutal. The castle falls during the sixth week. Volkmar is killed and the castle is dismantled by slaves. Only a few rocks remain by the year 1400 and by 1500 the castle is forgotten.

## **The Fires of Ma Coeur, pp. 705 - 760 Analysis**

The year is 1289 and the castle, Ma Coeur, is now occupied by the eighth Count of Gretz. The Muslim Empire is now under the control of the Mamelukes and they give permission for Volkmar and his son to travel. During the journey, Volkmar spends a lot of time thinking about the history of the area and of his family.

At Sephat, where they are supposed to meet Muzaffar, Volkmar learns from a Mameluke captain that there is talk of a new Crusade being formed in Europe. They both hope that it is not true and that the current truce will last. When news arrives that the Crusade has been called off, Volkmar cancels his plans to send his son to Germany.

Volkmar travels to Acre. He has several discussions with some Jews that he meets there, one of whom is a rabbi. He is curious about their religion and beliefs.

There is a massacre that day in Acre. A ship of crusaders arrives. They have been taught in Europe that if they kill the infidel, they will be rewarded. Volkmar tries to save the Rabbi and his manuscripts, but he is dead by the time Volkmar arrives.

Due to the massacre, the Mamelukes refuse to negotiate a continuation of the truce. Volkmar returns to Ma Coeur and prepares for a siege. If the siege occurs, he and his people will have enough food and water to last two years. When the Mamelukes arrive, Volkmar, his family, and four others are offered safe passage to Acre. The rest of the people are to become slaves. Volkmar will not accept the terms.

The siege lasts for six weeks. When the castle falls, Volkmar is killed. The castle is dismantled by slaves and is forgotten by 1500. The area is not resettled again until during the 1500s, when Jews settled in the area.





# The Sainly Men of Safed, pp. 763-869

## The Sainly Men of Safed, pp. 763-869 Summary

The fifteenth century is the age of exploration and expansion. It is the era of the Renaissance. Repression of the Jews continues. In Podi, Rabbi Zaki tells his wife that they will have to leave Podi and says that he wants to depart that week. The next day, he asks the duke for permission and is denied. His wife is at first opposed to the idea but then relents, seeing that they cannot continue the way they are. He and his family eventually receive permission to emigrate. They sail for Salonica in 1541 before the Inquisition beings in Italy. They eventually arrive in Safed.

Dr. Abulafia lives in Spain and watches the burning of one of his patients in the Inquisition. He is worried that the man might have informed about his Jewish ancestors and his Jewish studies with him. Dr. Abulafia flees Spain, leaving his family behind, and goes to Tunis, where he fakes his own murder. He circumcises himself and eventually moves to Safed.

Rabbi Eliezer is a German Jew of Gretz. When he asks to build a new synagogue, he is subject to public humiliation and told they are tearing down the present structure, which they do. Eliezer and Leah decide to leave Germany. After they leave and are on their way to Turkey, Leah is killed and his son dies of an illness. Eliezer and his daughter Elisheba eventually arrive in Safed.

Safed, in 1500, has about one thousand inhabitants that live in mud brick homes and have a Turkish governor. Within ninety years, it will become a manufacturing city and trading center with a population of over sixty thousand. The town is on a camel route between Damascus and Acre and this contributes to it growth. European Jews bring the spinning wheel with them and Safed becomes an Asian weaving center. Rabbis Zaki, Eliezer and Abulfia make Safed a learning center.

Zaki is the first to arrive. He and his family stay at the house of Yom Tov, who shows them around the town. Yom Tov is the local rabbi and runs a weaving business. He supplies Rachel and the three daughters with spinning wheels so they can work. Zaki runs his shoemaking business in the front room of the house while the women work in the back. Soon two of his daughters are married. When Abulafia arrives, Zaki talks to him about marrying his oldest daughter. Abulafia tells Zaki about his life in Spain. Abulafia eventually marries Sarah.

The night of the wedding, Rabbi Eliezer and his daughter arrive in Safed. He spends his time studying and codifying Jewish law. This is his way of trying to save Judaism. Each of the three rabbis ahve different personalities and specialties within Judaism and they each become respected for their areas of expertise.



European visitors to Safed are very impressed by what they see—healthy children, working men and women. Both Arabs and Jews live peaceably under the rule of the Turks. In 1551 there develops a rift in the Jewish community when Abulafia grants a woman a divorce contrary to Jewish law. Eliezer protests the decision and write a letter of dissent. This starts the feud which divides the Jews in the town. The feud is ended when Zaki, Eliezer and Abulafia sit down and talk out their differences.

After the death of Rachel, Eliezer wants Zaki to marry Elisheba. Zaki does and they are very happy. Zaki decides to travel to Rome to defend the Torah and Judaism. He is basically offering himself as a martyr. Two weeks later he departs, leaving behind a menorah that had been given to him.

## **The Saintly Men of Safed, pp. 763-869 Analysis**

In fifteenth century Podi, Italy, there is a yearly ritual. Prostitutes and fat scantily clad Jewish men have a race. Every year, Rabbi Zaki is included in the race. His wife Rachel and their daughters find it to be a humiliating experience and want him to lose weight. The Friar's speech scares Zaki. This is the time of the Spanish Inquisition and he wants to leave Italy. The duke will not give permission. He eventually receives the permission he needs.

During the Inquisition, people accused of being Jews are arrested, tortured and burned at the stake. If they confess, they are strangled instead of being burned. This is what Zaki is afraid of.

Other Jews in Europe make the decision to leave. Dr. Abulafia of Spain makes the decision to flee, leaving his family behind. He has Jewish ancestors and studied Judaism with a patient who has been burned to death by the Inquisition. He flees to Tunis, fakes his death and eventually goes to Safed.

In Germany, Rabbi Eliezer is subjected to public humiliation when he asks to build a new synagogue. They destroy the current synagogue. The only hope they have is that Martin Luther will succeed in his revolt against the Catholic Church, but he turns on the Jews when they will not convert. Eliezer and Leah decide to leave Germany. His wife and son die on the journey and Eliezer and his daughter Elisheba eventually settle in Safed.

The city of Safed is located on a trade route and develops into a major manufacturing city. It becomes well known for its three rabbis—Zaki, Eliezer and Abulafia. They each have their area of specialty scholarship and are highly regarded and respected.

One of Zaki's daughters marries Abulafia. Abulafia tells Zaki the story of the family he left behind in Spain. They were eventually burned at the stake and he feels guilty. When Rachel dies, Zaki marries his daughter Elisheba.

Zaki thinks he has a vision. He decides to return to Rome to defend Judaism and the Torah. He may become a martyr, but he feels he has to do it. Like Abulafia, he feels

guilty for leaving his congregation in Podi. All but one was burned at the stake. Elisheba tells him that if he feels he must go to Rome, then she will not stand in his way.



# Twilight of an Empire, pg. 873 - 927

## Twilight of an Empire, pg. 873 - 927 Summary

Ahmed Tabari is the Kaimakam of Tubariyeh in 1880. He is the governor and is listening to news of a boatful of Jews landing at Akka. The sultan recently revoked the constitution and there is a movement of reformers to have it reinstated.

Shmuel Hocoen is a Jewish immigrant from Russia. He wants land in Palestine to establish settlements for the incoming Jews. Tabari saved his life when he was being attacked by a Jewish community. He has gone from town to town looking for land. Hocoen talks to Tabari about buying land. Tabari finally allows the transfer under orders from Istanbul. Tabari wants more money or there will be no water on the land and figures he will have to extract it from the arriving Jews.

Tabari asks Hocoen about the Jewish books and Hocoen explains the purposes and meanings and some of the history that is involved. Hocoen then realizes that Tabari is trying to sell him the books for the synagogue that would be in his new Jewish settlement. Hocoen learns Tabari obtained them from a rabbi who had no money. Hocoen produces his hidden gold coins to purchase the books.

Kaimakam Tabari travels to Akka by caravan. They camp at Makor. They find a man walking down the road and Tabari finds that he is one of the men on Hocoen's list. The man is following an old map and is on his way after receiving water from the caravan. Tabari is trying to obtain baksheesh from the immigrants for the water to their settlement but decides it is fruitless after his encounter with the walking man. He only extracts a small portion of what he had hoped for from them.

Tabari meets with his superior over the issue of the constitution. Tabari tells him that he is not supporting the reformers and then finds out that his brother-in-law, who was a reformer, has been hanged in Beirut for his actions. They call it conspiracy. Tabari relaxes since he now knows that he has given the right answer, and if he had not, he might have found himself sentenced to death.

Tabari is told to keep things as they are in his area. Keep the Bedouins away from the town and allow the Christians to make their pilgrimages. As he is leaving, Tabari finds he has lost the gold coin he planned to give his superior and gives him the money he received from the Jews instead. He wants to keep the old man happy so he receives his promotion.

Tabari sends his troops to search for the coin at Makor but the coin is never found.



## Twilight of an Empire, pg. 873 - 927 Analysis

In 1880, the governor of Tubariyeh is Faraj ibn Ahmed Tabari and he is worried about the steps taken by the sultan. The constitution has been revoked and tyranny continues. His brother-in-law wants him to side with the reformers to restore law.

Shmuel Hucohen is a Jewish Russian immigrant to Palestine. When his family and others are slaughtered in a peasant uprising, he collects money from the villages in Vodzh and departs for Palestine to buy land for a Jewish settlement. He spends four years trying to buy land but keeps running into obstacles. Basically, the Turks and Arabs refuse to sell him land.

Hucohen finally approaches Tabari, who once saved his life. He does not really trust the man because of all of the bribes. Tabari has been ordered by Istanbul to allow the transfer of the land, but tells Hucohen that he must have more money if there is to be water on the land.

Tabari meets with his superior who asks him about his position on the constitution and the reformers and he replies that he supports the sultan. He is happy about his answer when he learns that his brother-in-law, who was one of the reformers, has been hanged in Beirut for conspiracy.

Tabari wants to keep his superior happy so he receives his promotions. He had a gold coin for him but lost it. His troops cannot find it at Makor.



# Rabbi Itzik and the Sabra, pp. 931-1016

## Rabbi Itzik and the Sabra, pp. 931-1016 Summary

The time is 1948 and Isidore Gottesmann is studying his almanac. He was in the area during World War II and decided to settle there because of meeting a young Jewish girl, Ilana, whom he eventually marries.

When the British give the Palestinian mandate to the United Nations in November, 1947, they devise a plan for an Arab state, Jewish state and an international city of Jerusalem. The result of this is the outbreak of war. The British are due to depart on May 15, 1948 and Gottesmann and his group are supposed to defend and hold the Upper Galilee section. The area contains five thousand Jews and a hundred thousand Arabs.

Gottesmann is looking at the figures. Most of the Jews are in Safed and are elderly or religious with only one hundred forty arms. Safed is vital to the Jewish state, even though the United Nations plan places it in Arab control. It has to be captured at the beginning. Gottesmann and Ilana are working with the Palmach.

The Gottmans and their team begin the hike to Safed. When they finally enter the city, there is a little girl, Vered Bar-el, who greets them. They are all singing songs. The only one who does not join in the festivities is Rabbi Itzik of Vodzh. He leads Talmud study sessions for his group.

Itzik's group has no problems as long as the British are in control but he worries about what will happen after the British leave. He is not in favor of the formation of the State of Israel.

The ten Jews in Rabbi Itzik's congregation decide to remain in Safed and tell the others to go. They refuse to go, saying they would stay and fight.

Relations between Jews and Arabs have always been good in Safed. As the date for the partition comes nearer, the Arabs want the Jews cleared from Safed and intense fighting begins on May 6. To the surprise of Gottesman the Arabs stopped at sunset, which gives the Jews time to re-group. They are joined by Elan Eliav and successfully defend Safed. After that, they go on to fight at Akka and then Jerusalem.

## Rabbi Itzik and the Sabra, pp. 931-1016 Analysis

The British Mandate applies to Palestine until the British gives the mandate to the United Nations in November 1947. The United Nations plan is to create a Palestinian state, a Jewish state and the independent city of Jerusalem.

Isidore Gottesman settles at Kfar Kerem after the end of World War II and marries Ilan. During the war he becomes involved with smuggling Jews into Israel. He knew of Hocoen and his settlement and met his daughter Ilana in Jerusalem. Now they are both working with the Palmach to defend the soon to be created Jewish state.

Both travel with a Palmach team to Safed and are greeted by singing children, one of whom is a young Vered Bar-el. All in the town rejoice except Rabbi Itzik from Vodzh. He leads groups in Talmud reading and feels they are safe under British rule. He is worried about the formation of the State of Israel.

The Jews of Safed decide to stay and fight, rather than evacuate with the British. They are successful in their efforts. They are joined by Ilan Eliav, who goes to fight at Akka and Jerusalem.



# The Tell, pp. 1019-1088

## The Tell, pp. 1019-1088 Summary

Vered is still in Chicago giving lectures in November 1964. He looks at news clippings sent by Zodman and realizes how much he misses her. There is news that Eliav has been offered a cabinet position.

A widow, Zipporah Zederbaum, comes to Cullinane with a problem. She wants to marry, but under Jewish law must have the permission of her dead husband's brother, who will not give permission. Cullinane asks Eliav for help in the matter. They discuss the circumstances of the case and look at other cases and the Talmud.

Eliav also explains how, under Israeli law, he and Vered would have to marry in Cyprus and return to Israel to live in sin. He also explains that Vered is divorced and he has to obey Jewish law to be in the Cabinet. Cullinane tells Eliav that if he does not marry Vered before Cullinane leaves Israel, that he will marry her and go home to America. Eliav tells Cullinane that Vered is a Jew who will never leave Israel.

A priest, Father Vilspronck, comes to help with the analysis of the basilica. They study various demographic figures and other figures about the physical structure at Makor, knowing that their figures must be accurate.

Eliav reveals that Oxford has asked him to teach there. It is a prestigious offer and he is considering it. Vered tells Cullinane that she will not marry a non-Jew. At this point, Zodman, who flies over from Chicago, arrives and announces that he wants to marry Vered. Cullinane finds out this is the real reason why he asked Cullinane to lecture in Chicago, knowing that he could not and would send Vered instead.

Zodman finds out that he has to marry Vered in Israel. Zodman is also divorced and the divorce is not recognized. They can marry in Cyprus.

As the excavation continues, they find the edge of a cave. There are bones in the cave. While they are talking, Tabari explains why he never left the area. The land is special to both Arabs and Jews.

## The Tell, pp. 1019-1088 Analysis

It is November of 1964. Vered is still in Chicago and Cullinane is confronted with a widow who cannot marry under Israeli law because her brother-in-law will not give consent. He talks to Eliav about the situation and they have a discussion. Eliav's point of view is that Cullinane does not understand Judaism. Eliav finally wins a legal concession so the woman can marry.





Under Israeli law, Eliav cannot legally marry Vered. He explains the situation to Cullinane who says he, Cullinane, will marry her and take her to America if Eliav does not marry her by the time he is ready to leave. Eliav replies by saying that Vered is a Jew and will not marry a non-Jew and that she would not leave Israel.

To everyone's surprise, Zodman arrives and says he wants to marry Vered. He finds he cannot under Israeli law. His civil divorce is not recognized. They can marry in Cyprus. They plan to move to America.



# Characters

## John Cullinane

Dr. John Cullinane is an archaeologist from the Biblical Museum in Chicago. He travels to the Holy Land hoping to do some important archaeological digs. He is in his forties and is an Irish-Catholic who was educated at Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Grenoble and many other places. He studied in various places to acquire special skills and to perfect his technical analysis. He grew up in Gary, Indiana where his father worked for the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. He is well known in his field.

As the dig continues, Cullinane learns more about the Hebrew culture on which Makor was based. He writes his reports with Eliav advising him on what to read to form the basis for his reports.

Cullinane likes to attend Catholic masses in different parts of the world when he travels. He likes not only the architecture, but also the differences in the liturgical styles. He is very impressed with the services in the Holy Land. He also enjoys the Jewish services that he regularly attends, even though Eliav and Vered will not attend with him. Cullinane also visits the mosques in the area. Tabari usually goes with him.

Cullinane feels the Jews have a moral right to Israel dating back to the days of Herod. It is the Jews who have made the land productive.

Cullinane feels that he is in love with Vered and wants her to marry him. She will not because he is a non-Jew.

## Jemail Tabari

Jemail is an Oxford educated Arab and an archaeologist. His father had been an Arab leader during the British occupation and his grandfather had been the governor of Akko. He fought against the Jews in 1948 and afterward decided to stay in Akko and help rebuild. He is well-known and respected in his field. Tabari shows Cullinane much of the area, exposing him to both Jewish and Arab religions and culture. He teaches Cullinane much of the history of the area and explains where the Europeans went wrong in the Crusades. The infidels to them were the Muslims, yet they killed Jews and Christians and Arabs who were friendly to their cause. They do not eliminate the Turkish barbarians. Tabari does not like the Turks and he feels they ruined the Arab civilization. The Europeans ignored all the groups that wanted to attack the Turks.

Tabari discusses the role of the Jews with Cullinane and Eliav. He also believes that the Jews have a right to the land. He believes that the Bedouins are the fathers of the desert but that the Jews who settled and developed the land have a moral right to it.



## **Eighth Count of Gretz**

The eighth Count of Gretz resides at Ma Coeur in 1289. Volkmar, a descendant of the Family of Ur, is married and has an eleven year old son. He receives permission from the Mamelukes to make a pilgrimage around the area. He takes his son along and explains the history of what occurred at each site. On the trip he learns that there are rumors of a new Crusade beginning, but then hears it is not true.

When he is in Acre, a massacre takes place as arriving Crusaders kill many of the people. This ends the truce of the Mamelukes. He prepares Ma Coeur for defense of the attack by the Mamelukes. He refuses to accept the terms of slavery for all of his people except himself and his family. He is killed during the attack.

## **Family of Ur**

Ur is one of the first residents of Makor in primitive times. He is in his thirties and approaching the end of his life. He and his family live in a cave and he hunts to provide food for them and the other people in their group. He is respected by the cave people. His wife and son develop the practice of growing wheat and moved their family and group toward the stage of self-sufficiency.

Ur's daughter marries a hunter who killed a dog about to attack her. He shows them a place where flint stones are abundant, which allows them to make more implements.

## **Hoopoe**

Hoopoe is the engineer who built the wall around Makor. He is married to Kerith and is thirty nine years old. He has two children by Kerith and others by slave girls. He was given the job at Makor in return for his faithful service to King David. He is a descendant of Uriel and lives four hundred fifty years after him.

He designs a water system for Makor that takes four years to complete. They remain in Makor, even though Kerith wants to return to Jerusalem. Eventually, Kerith runs off to Jerusalem with another man, leaving Hoopoe to live out his days in Makor, raising their two children.

## **Urbaal**

Urbaal is a descendant of Ur, living seven thousand years after Ur. He is well respected in his community. According to custom, his first born son is sacrificed by the priests for the good of the community. He tries to placate his wife Timna by buying another statue of the goddess Astarte, saying they will have more children. He is enamored with a slave girl and the priests select him to spend a week with her. He becomes obsessed with her and wants her for his own. At the next selection, the priests choose another



man for the slave girl and crazed Urbaal kills him. He is killed by the priests for his crime. Urbaal evolves into the god Baal.

## **Ilan Eliav**

Ilan Eliav is the administrator in control of the management of the dig at Makor. He is Jewish and works at a government ministry. One of his purposes is the protection of artifacts found in Israel. His wife was killed in the 1956 Sinai Campaign and he is engaged to Vered. Eliav spends a lot of time explaining Judaism and the Jewish culture to Cullinane. He is the one that Cullinane always questions. Eliav considers the animosity between the nations in the area to be part of a historical process. After the partition, he helps to defend Safed and then goes on to fight at Akka and Jerusalem.

## **Faraj ibn Ahmed Tabari**

Tabari is the governor of Tubariyeh in 1880. He attracts the attention of an Arab scholar as a boy, marries his daughter and attends school for business in Istanbul. He and his wife have three children. He attains his position by implementing a system of taxes that is profitable for him and the tax collectors. He uses the money to purchase his karmakam. Tabari saved the life of Hocohen and Hocohen asked him for permission to buy land, which he receives from Istanbul.

Tabari, when asked by his superior about his position on the reformers, says he sides with the sultan. The answer saves his life because his brother-in-law, one of the reformers, has been executed in Beirut.

## **Vered Bar-EI**

Dr. Vered Bar-EI is in her thirties and is a friend of Cullinane. She is also an expert in the area of dating artifacts and is the best in Israel at her work. Vered is a widow from the 1956 Sinai War and is engaged to Eliav. When Cullinane's sponsor wants him to fly to Chicago with the Candlesticks of Death, they decide to send Vered. When she returns, Zodman follows and they try to marry, but must leave Israel in order to do so because his divorce is not recognized by Israeli law.

## **Zadok**

Zadok is the leader of a tribe of seven hundred people who are ordered by the god El-Shaddai to move west. He is in his sixties and has thirty children. He and his son Epher lead their tribe to the west, to the land of the Canaanites, around Makor. They settle there in peace until they clash over religion. Many Hebrews are killed in an attack by the Canaanites. The Hebrews attack and burn Makor. Zadok dies that night and Epher, his son, becomes the new leader.



## Uriel

Uriel is a descendant of the Family of Ur and functions as a leader of Makor, seven hundred years after the incident involving Urbaal. He is forty-one years old, married to Rahab and has one son named Zibeon. Makor was prosperous under his leadership. He allows the settlement of the Hebrews and believes they will assimilate. Zadok tells him that the Canaanites must accept El-Shaddai and war breaks out. Most of the Canaanites are killed in the burning of Makor. Uriel survives but is killed when he refuses to accept El-Shaddai.

## Tarphon

Tarphon is the governor of Makor in 169. He is from a Canaanite family and is married to a Greek woman, Melissa, which brings him prominence and acceptance in the Seleucid empire. Tarphon has been educated in Athens. He has received the praise of the emperor. He is responsible for organizing the building of a gymnasium with baths in Makor. He is also a renowned athlete.

He sponsors Jehubabel's son and talks him into having his circumcision reversed so he can be a citizen and take part in the Olympics.

## Jehubabel

Jehubabel is the leader of the Jewish community in Makor in 167 B.C.E. when the flogging of the old man occurs. He is a descendant of Rimmon and his second wife Geula and their son Jehubabel. He is in the business of dyes and has his business right next to the synagogue. Jehubabel's son Menelaus, whose real name is Benjamin, is an athlete, an activity that his father has little use for. Jehubabel is committed to Judaism and keeps performing circumcisions. He and the Jews flee from Makor.

## Timon Myrmex

Timon is an architect who builds most of the Roman building in Makor, Caesarea and other places. He is a Roman who is married to Shelomith, a Jew. Both are imprisoned in the temple of Venus and wait to see if they will die that day. Timon has been an associate of Herod's who slaughtered thousands of Jews. Timon and Shelomith are set free since Herod is dead.

## Yigal

Yigal is a twenty-six year old man living in Makor around 37 C.E. He operates an olive press and is married with children. Even though Yigal is just a poor commoner, he foresees what will happen if the Romans invade and develops a plan for stopping the



Romans. The Jews lie on the road blocking their path and are prepared to die to keep statues out of the synagogue. The plan is successful.

Yigal is 53 at the time of Vespasian and again favors resistance to the Romans.

## Menahem

Menahem is born out of wedlock. His mother runs off and the stonecutter, Yohanen, raises the boy, but he can never be accepted as a Jew. The rabbis at Tveryl decide that if he is caught in a small theft, sold into slavery with a Hebrew family and married to a Hebrew slave, in five years when they are free he can be accepted into a congregation and his children will be Jews. He talks to the priest about the basilica and finds he can be accepted as a convert to Christianity and freely marry. He adopts the Christian name of Mark.

## Shmuel Hocohen

Shmuel Hocohen is a Jewish immigrant. He comes to Palestine from Russia and he wants land. He has been trying to obtain land for a Jewish settlement for over four years, but is unable to do so because of all the bribes. He has attended a Russian school in Vodzh and become interested in socialism. When he returns to his village one evening, he finds his parents and others slaughtered by a peasant uprising. He collects money from fellow Jews to establish a settlement in Tiberias. After four years of trying, Istanbul grants permission through Tabari, and the Russian settlers arrive.

## Count Volkmar

Volkmar is the Count of Gretz in Germany. He refuses to join a group loyal to the false Pope but helps form a Crusades group through his brother-in-law Gunter's promptings. The object is money but they slaughter many Christians and Jews. His wife and daughter are killed along the way. In Makor he is injured and his leg is amputated. He remains there and remarries. When Gunter, his bother-in-law returns to Makor, he builds the castle, Ma Coeur.

## Zaki

Zaki is a rabbi in the Italian town of Podi. He is married to Rachel and works as a shoemaker. They have three daughters. He senses the impending dangers of the Inquisition and he and his family emigrate to Salonica. They eventually settled in Safed.

Zaki finds husbands for his three daughters, arranging for the oldest to marry Abulafia. When Rachel dies, he marries Elisheba, the daughter of Eliezer. He decides that he has to go to Rome to argue the case of Judaism with the Church.



## Rabbi Eliezer bar Zadek

Rabbi Eliezer is a German Jew married to a woman named Leah. When he asks to build a new synagogue, he is publicly humiliated and his synagogue is destroyed. As conditions worsen, he and his wife decide to leave Germany. Leah and his son die on the journey but Eliezer and his daughter Elisheba eventually arrive in Safed.

Eliezer spends most of his time studying the religious books and codifying the Law. After the death of Rachel, Zaki's wife, he arranges for the marriage of Elisheba to Zaki.

## Rabbi Asher ha-Gassi

Asher is a rabbi in Makor in 330 C.E. and is a descendant of the Family of Ur. He is unpaid and supports his family by working in the groats mills. He has the stone cutter finishing the interior of the synagogue. He travels to Tverya to work on the formulation of the Laws which will govern how the Jewish people live and work no matter where they are.

## Dr. Abulafia

Abulafia is a Spanish physician who watches one of his patients burned by the Inquisition. He has Jewish ancestors and is worried that his patient might have informed on him. He flees Spain and goes to Tunis, leaving his wife and family behind. He eventually settles in Safed. He marries Sarah, the daughter of Zaki. He still feels guilty for leaving his wife and sons behind in Spain. They were burned by the Inquisition.

## Jeremoth

Jeremoth is fifty two years old and the descendant of the Family of Ur. After the return of the Makor men conscripted into the Pharaoh's army, Jeremoth fortifies the city and prepares to defend against the Babylonians. He has Gomer fighting him every step of the way, until he has her imprisoned.

## Gomer

Gomer is a widow who has a son named Rimmon. She is told by Yahweh to travel to Jerusalem with her son. She does this and Yahweh continues to speak through her. She listens to him and casts her daughter-in-law and grandchild out of her house. She is killed by the Babylonians.



## Petronius

Petronius is a Roman General in 37 C.E. He is ordered to place statues of Caligula in the synagogues in Judea. The Jews oppose his actions. He finally disobeys his orders and is ordered to be killed by Caligula. Caligula is murdered and the life of Petronius is saved.

## Josephus

Josephus is twenty-nine when he is chosen to govern the Galilee. He arrives in Makor as they are debating how to respond to the latest Roman threat. He says they will stay and fight. He leads the defense against the Romans for three weeks and then leaves Makor. He says it will not be good for the Jewish people if he dies.

## Abd Umar

Abd Umar is also an Arab leader of a squadron of raiders in 635. He is the son of a slave and grows up in Yathrib. He is assigned to capture Makor as non-violently as possible. His purpose is to spread the dominion of Islam. In Yathrib, Abd Umar helped defend the Prophet Muhammad. He takes Makor without a battle.

## Shaliq ibn Tewkik

Shaliq is the head of the Family of Ur in Makor when Volkmar arrives. Shaliq has a plan for survival. He and his family hide in a cave for the first three days, and survive. He presents himself as a doctor and amputates the leg of the injured Volkmar, thus gaining favor with him. He readily converts to Christianity and adopts the name of Luke.

## Abu Zeid

Abu Zeid is an Arab captain who leads squadrons of raiders in 635. He attacks and burns Safat.

## Mamelukes

The Mamelukes are Asian slaves imported from Asia to serve the Turks. They gain control of the Muslim Empire in 1289. Damascus is their stronghold.





# Objects/Places

## Akko

Akko is a seaport on the Galilee in the Holy Land and is where the book opens.

## Makor

Makor is the location of the archaeological dig. The formal name of the site is Tell Makor.

## Zefat

Zefat is a village near Makor where the nearest synagogue is.

## Hazor

Hazor is a town to the north of Makor.

## Accho

Accho is a town in Phoenicia which manufactures iron tools. It is eight miles from Makor.

## Jerusalem

Jerusalem is a major religious center and is located ninety miles from Makor.

## Egypt

Egypt lies to the west of Makor.

## Antioch

Antioch is a city north of Makor where sports games are held.

## Ptolemais

Ptolemais is a town near Makor.



## **Tverya**

Tverya is a town on the Dead Sea, near Makor.

## **Tabariyyah**

Tabariyyah is a town southeast of Makor.

## **Yathrib**

Yathrib is an Arab city that becomes Medina.

## **Damascus**

Damascus is a city in what is now Syria.

## **Germany**

Germany is the European country where Volkmar, Count of Gretz is from.

## **Italy**

Italy is the European country where Zaki is from.

## **Safed**

Safed is a town fifteen miles from Makor that the Jews begin to settle in the 1500s.

## **Spain**

Spain is a European country and is the site of the Spanish Inquisition.



# Themes

## Development of Judaism

The Source is basically a journey through the history of the development of Judaism, from the days of paganism to the 1960s. It begins at Makor when Ur lives in a cave and is a pagan. After Ur, there are a variety of different pagan gods at the site, including Baal. When the god El-Shaddai appears, the emphasis begins to shift to monotheism and the beginnings of Judaism as he evolves into the god Yahweh. As Yahweh develops, paganism becomes the strength of the Greek and Roman empires and the followers of the one god have to find ways to exist within these frameworks as many Jews are killed during these times.

Christianity and Islam also affect the Jews. Some of the Muslims view Islam to be a result of the development process that begins with Judaism, continues with Christianity and reaches its apex with Islam. At each stage in history, these different religions exist and interact with one another. It is usually the Jews who are persecuted. In spite of this, the religion and the culture develop and evolve, in spite of their clashes with other cultures.

Much of Judaism is learned from Cullinane's talks with Eliav and Tabari as the novel moves through the different historical stages. Eliva and Tabari explain the customs and laws and how they evolved.

## Vered

Vered is one the archaeologists at the site. She is an Israeli expert on pottery who had been married and divorced. Her husband was killed in the Sinai campaign, so she is a widow with a divorce that is not recognized under Israeli law. When Cullinane first arrives in Israel, Vered is engaged to Eliav. Cullinane does not know this until he asks her to marry him.

Cullinane thinks that Vered and Eliav have a strange relationship and that Vered sees it as an obligation to be married to him. Cullinane does not feel that Vered and Eliav love each other. It is through Vered that Eliav explains the role of a Jewish woman and Sabra. Vered is Jewish, will not marry a non-Jew and does not want to leave Israel.

It is also through Vered, that some of the Jewish laws are revealed. Since Vered is divorced, she and Eliav cannot marry in Israeli. They will have to fly to Cyprus for the marriage and then live in sin in Israel. At the end, when Zodman appears and wants to marry Vered, he finds that he cannot marry in Israel because his civil divorce is not recognized. Even though Vered spends most of the time of the novel in Chicago on a lecture tour, she is still representative of Jewish women and Sabra, and represents the love interest in the novel.



## Clash of Religions

Another underlying theme of the book is the clash of different religions. In addition to looking at how they developed, Michener also shows how they clashed with one another as the rulers of the time tried to force their beliefs on their subjects, no matter what part of the world they were in. In the primitive days of Ur, there are several gods that the pagans worship. Eventually, some of the pagan gods become powerful enough to require human sacrifices as happens when Timna has to sacrifice her first-born son.

Eventually, one god, El-Shaddai, becomes powerful and eventually is accepted as the one god, which is the beginning of the faith of the Hebrews. There is then tension between the Hebrews and the Canaanites who worship Baal. At the same time, the Greeks and Romans are trying to force their pagan gods on the people. Christianity also results in conflict as does Islam because the ruling entity tries to force its beliefs on the non-believers. There are also periods such as the Spanish Inquisition when non-believers are considered to be heretics and tortured and burned at the stake. The Inquisition and the Crusades result in the death of thousands of people.

Each religion continues to develop and become established, in spite of one trying to force itself on another. This adequately describes the situation in Makor and in the Middle East.

# Style

## Point of View

The novel is written in the third person point of view. The narrator of the novel is obviously the author, James A. Michener. Michener helps the characters tell their story from the primitive days of Ur to the 1960s. Even though there is plenty of dialogue between the characters, Michener is the story teller that fills in the details of history.

The use of the third person has more advantages than the use of the first person. In the first person, the main storyteller would have to be present at all of the events, since the knowledge of the reader is confined to the knowledge of the storyteller. This situation is avoided by the use of the third person. Given the fact that the novel encompasses a time period that encompasses all of Judaism, there is no way the first person point of view could have been used.

The third person is the most appropriate manner in which to tell the story of *The Source*.

## Setting

The setting of the novel is in the Middle East. Most of the story is the story of the archaeological site at Makor where the excavation is taking place. For the most part, the physical setting remains the same, but the time period changes as the history of the site is revealed. Some of the chapters may be several thousand years apart chronologically, but the site is still Makor and the different levels of the excavation.

There are also different cities in the area where the action takes place, as the historical process of the novel evolves. Jerusalem is the site that becomes the holy place for three different religions. During the period of the Crusades, there are scenes in Spain, Italy and Germany. Spain is the site of the Spanish Inquisition which Dr. Abulafia flees from. Podi, Italy is the home of Rabbi Zaki who flees with his family before the Inquisition reaches them. Grezt, Germany is the place where Rabbi Eliezer and his family flee from. It is also the home of Count Volkmar who leads a Crusade into Palestine.

There are also scenes in the area around Makor. Safed is another major setting since it is a town close to Makor where the Jews begin to settle in the late eighteenth century.

## Language and Meaning

In spite of its length, *The Source* is an easy book to read. The language is clear and simple. There are some words that are peculiar to the culture of the time but these words are explained by the author. There are no words with hidden meanings or



sentences that the reader has to struggle to ascertain the meaning of. Some of the sentences are unnecessarily long, but they are understandable.

There is a lot of dialogue in the book since there are always conversations between the main characters. These are easy to follow and read since they are written in everyday English. There are very few foreign words used and they are explained. Overall, the book is easy to read.

## Structure

The structure of the book is interesting. There are no chapter numbers used. There are titles that go with the subject of the chapter. There are seventeen different chapters or topics that tell the story of a different time period in the history of Judaism. In each case, the main body of the section is preceded by a page with a picture of an artifact and a paragraph that explains it. The next page consists of one or two maps of the area at that particular stage of history. The maps and illustrations make the subjects more real for the reader, who can picture where the events are taking place and can see a sketch of the artifact.

The book begins by revealing the different artifacts that are found in the dig at Makor. Each following section then relates to the time period of the artifact and what was taking place during that historical stage. It is a very clever and unique way of structuring the novel.



## Quotes

"'It's a work of art,' Cullinane admitted grudgingly, 'but of no archaeological value.' He pushed it away, unaware that it was to become the most notorious single object that would be found at the dig. 'Damn,' he growled. 'A bullet, a gold coin nearly a thousand years too old and a menorah. All in the wrong levels at the wrong times. What kind of dig is this?'" (The Tell, pp. 31-32)

"The family had not been in the house long when Ur's son discovered that the springtime planting of wheat need not be left to the chance scatter of autumn grains. By holding back some of the harvest and keeping it dry in a pouch of deerskin, the grains could be planted purposefully in the spring and the wheat could be made to grow exactly where and when it was needed, and with this discovery the Family of Ur moved close to the beginnings of a self-sufficient society. They did not know it, but if a food supply could be insured, the speed of change would be unbelievable; within a few thousand years cities would be feasible and civilizations too. Men would be able to plan ahead and allocate specialized jobs to each other. They would find it profitable to construct roads to speed the movement of food and to devise a money system for convenient payments. The whole intricate structure of an interlocking society became practical the moment Ur's son mastered his wild grains." (The Bee Eater, p. 97)

"In later generations people who spoke other languages would translate this old Semitic name, which actually meant he of the mountains, as God Almighty, for through devious changes El-Shaddai was destined to mature into that god whom much of the world would worship. But in these fateful days, when the little group of Hebrews camped waiting for the signal to march westward, El-Shaddai was the god of no one but themselves; they were not even certain that he had continued as the god of those other Hebrews who had moved on to distant areas like Egypt. But of one thing Zadok was sure. El-Shaddai personally determined the destiny of this group, for all the people available to him in the teeming area between the Euphrates and the Nile, he had chosen these Hebrews as his predilected people, and they lived within his embrace, enjoying security that others did not know." (An Old Man and His God, pp. 177-178)

"Thus it was the tragedy of Canaan that it encountered the Hebrews when the two peoples were at a mighty crossroads; the Canaanites were degrading the concept of god while the Hebrews were elevating it. The conflict between these two philosophies would continue for more than a thousand years and there would be many times when it would seem that Baal of the Canaanites had triumphed. (An Old Man and His God, p. 217)

"These were the great formative years of the Hebrew ritual, for from Jerusalem, King David and his priests were endeavoring to impress upon Israel one clearly defined religion, but these reforms were slow to be adopted in Makor; its little temple continued to function as the focus of an ancient community ritual rather than as a surrogate of the unified national religion." (Psalm of the Hoopoe Bird, pg. 248)



"The more Cullinane heard on this matter—and it came up at many dinners—the more correct he found Vered to be in a thirteenth-century sense. In primitive societies it was man's job to placate the gods and woman's to keep the home, but this was dangerously close to the Germanic ideal of Kaiser, Kinder, Kiiche. He was willing to concede Eliav's point, that one of the reason why Judaism had been so strong internally was its subtle relationship between the sexes, but he could not forget that Christianity overwhelmed Judaism partly because of its emotional appeal to women. Judaism was a religion for men, Cullinane said to himself. Christianity was for women." (The Voice of Gomer, p. 353)

"Many times in their long history the Jews would be threatened with extinction because of planned religious persecutions, but one of the later holocausts would state so gently and with such persuasiveness as the first in the series, launched in the year 171 B.C.E. by Antiochus IV, tyrant of the Seleucid empire." (In the Gymnasium, p. 377)

"In the year that General Petronius bore down with his legions upon Judea, Yigal was only twenty-six years old, and he was one of the least important men in Makor, but by some intuitive sense it was he who foresaw with shimmering clarity what would happen to the Jews if the Romans succeeded in erecting their statues to Caligula in local synagogues and in desecrating the great temple in Jerusalem. What was more remarkable, it was Yigal—this undistinguished olive-grove worker—who discovered the only tactic whereby the Jews could halt the Romans; so one morning, to his own surprise, he assembled what Jews he could in Makor's Roman forum and, standing on the steps of the Venus temple, harangued them as follows...." (Yigal and His Three Generals, p. 458)

"For what the rabbis were doing, in part consciously and in part unconsciously, was to create a body of law that would bind the Jews together as they went into exile to the Diaspora. Without a homeland the Jews would live within their law and become a nation mightier than those which had oppressed them. Without cities of their own they would as a cohesive unit help determine the destinies of cities they had not yet seen. Wherever they went—to Spain or Egypt or Argentina—they would take with them the decisions of the rabbis of Tverya, and within the limits established by these decisions they would live, a more permanent group of people than any who had surrounded them in their two thousand years in Israel. Gentiles, observing their homelessness, would construct the myth of the Wandering Jew, but in reality this phrase was meaningless, for no matter where the Jew wandered, if he took with him the Talmud he as home." (The Law, pp. 536-537)

"Abd Umar had been too young to be termed a friend of the Prophet's, but he had been close enough to know the impact of what Muhammad had preached—a lesson whose five steps were so simple that any human being could understand: the old gods were dead; there was only one God; He had been discovered by the Jews; He sent the great prophet Jesus Christ to reveal His views; and now He had sent the final prophet, Muhammad, to complete them. On one point Muhammad had always insisted when Abd Umar heard him speaks; he had not come out of Arabia with some strange new





doctrine, but only with the fulfillment of what the Jews and Christians had started before." (A Day In the Life of a Desert Rider, p. 609)

"In the early summer of 1290 the position of the Crusaders seemed to improve and a restrained optimism could be felt creeping across the countryside. Crops promised to be above average. The Mamelukes were at rest and word reached Acre that the call of Pope Nicholas IV for a Crusade had been ignored throughout Europe, and men could reasonably hope that the present truce would not be disturbed."(The Fires of Ma Coeur, p. 732)

"But in those dark days, when the Jews of Europe sighed at the stake and smothered in their districts without any moral protest from the Christian world, one gleam of hope began to shine from a most unlikely quarter: the inconspicuous hillside town of Safed in Galilee." (The Saintly Men of Safed, p. 765)

"It was singular, John Cullinane thought, that twice in modern history the Jews had been saved by the Turks. It had happened in the sixteenth century when Turkey had offered the outcasts such refuges as Salonica, Constantinople and Safred; and it had been repeated in the nineteenth century when pogroms ravaged Poland and Russia. Why had it been the Muslim Turks who had salvaged the Jews when Christian nations tried to exterminate the religion from which they themselves had spring? One might reason that Islam had been tolerant because it valued Old Testament traditions more highly than Christians did, for Muhammad had specifically directed tolerance toward Jews, while Christianity never did; but this was pecious reasoning, and Cullinane dismissed it." (Twilight of an Empire, p. 886)

"The three had this in common: that each loved the land passionately as a man loves a woman, joyously as a child loves the dawning of a day when there is to be a picnic on the land; the sabra loved Galilee as the soil from which her people had sprung through generations uncounted; the soldier loved Palestine as a refuge after years of fighting and the little blue-eyed rebbe loved Israel as the land that God had chosen as a site for testimony. It was during the turbulent spring days of 1948 that their three loves came into contact." (Rebbe Itzik and the Sabra, p. 931)

"'You're wrong,' Eliav protested. 'You've been digging in Judaism but you haven't tried to understand it. John, we're a special people with special laws. Why do you suppose I asked you to read Deuteronomy five times? Damn it, you stupid Irishman! I'm not a Catholic. I'm not a Baptist. I'm a Jew, and I come from a most ancient people with most ancient laws.'" (The Tell, p. 1028)



## Topics for Discussion

Explain the meanings of the terms C.E. and B.C.E.

What is Makor and why is it important?

How do the Canaanites come to clash with the Hebrews?

What do the terms Ashkenazi and Sephardi refer to?

How was Makor affected by the arrival of Christianity? What happened?

How was Makor impacted by the Crusades?

What is the story behind the development of Safed?